DO YOU WANT TO BE A FARMER?

NETWORK: NBC DATE: November 4, 1944

ORIGIN: WRC TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM- EWT

(Produced by the Office of Distribution of the War Food Administration, this script is for reference only and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program...presented for more than eleven years in the interest of consumers.)

0

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....CLOSE DRAWER

4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available as a public service for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the War Food Administration.

Today CONSUMER TIME is dedicated to those thousands of Americans here...and on the battle fronts of the world...who are saying...

5. MAN: What am I going to do when all this is over? I'm going out and buy me a farm!

6. ANNCR: Well...there are a good many answers to this question "shall I be a farmer?" And...the truth of the matter is that, well, lots of people don't know the "truth of the matter."

7. FREYMAN: I know a boy who has a dream farm. He works in an aircraft factory outside of Baltimore. And he works hard. And when he isn't working, he's dreaming of this farm of his.

8. BILLY: Gee, you should see it, Mrs. Freyman! There's a big red barn, and a silo. And I'll have a vegetable garden where we'll grow all we can eat. There'll be pastures and streams and thick woods where I can go hunting.

9. FREYMAN: What will you grow on your farm, Billy?

10. BILLY: Oh, a little of this and that. Corn, and wheat, and tobacco maybe! And I'll have cows...a pasture full of contented cows. Mrs. Freyman...there'll be peace and quiet on my farm...and I'll be on my own...independent.

11. FREYMAN: Where's this going to be?

12. BILLY: (DOUBTFULLY) Well, I don't know, exactly. Maybe in Maryland...maybe I'll go to Iowa...or Arizona. I'm not sure yet.

13. FREYMAN: And how much is it going to cost, Billy.

14. BILLY: I don't know that either. Got to figure that one out. But I'll be making a good living...on my own. Just wait'll this war's over. You bet I'm going to get me a farm.

PAUSE:

15. ANNCR: And there are other people...people who are tired of crowded city conditions...older people who've saved a little money towards a life-long dream...to own a few acres of farm land.

16. MAN: And then...there are the boys overseas. Youngsters who are trying to think...to study...to ponder through the turmoil and chaos of war...

17. BOY: What am I going to do when I get out of this mess? What am I going to do when I get back home?

18. SOUND: BATTLE SOUND...WHISTLE AND SCREAM OF SHELLS...EXPLOSION...BOMBS AND ARTILLERY FIRE IN DISTANCE.

19. BILL: Well, they missed us again, Joey.

20. JOE: (SURLY) Yeah. One more time...and we're still here.

21. BILL: Muddy, but still here.

22. SOUND: ARTILLERY FIRE UP AND DOWN, SLOW.

23. BILL: Hey, you know what, Joey?

24. JOEY: What, Kid?

25. BILL: You know what I've been lying here and thinking about?

26. JOEY: Naw,...what?

27. BILL: I've been thinking what I'm going to do when I get back home...

28. JOEY: Who ain't thinking that?

29. BILL: I got it all figured out. I'm going to live a life of peace and ease...nothin' to do but milk cows and go hunting and fishing... plow the fields in the spring.

30. JOEY: (DOUBTFUL) A very pretty picture, Billy boy.

31. BILL: And harvest the yellow corn in the fall...

32. SOUND: WHISTLE ROAR AND CRASH OF BOMB REVERBERATING INTO SILENCE. BACKGROUND AS BEFORE.

33. BILL: Yes sir, Joey, that's what I'm going to do. I'm going to get me a farm.

34. SOUND: BATTLE SOUND OUT.

PAUSE:

35. JOHN: Yes, Mrs. Freyman...Overseas, and here at home...plenty of people are thinking about...well, maybe wouldn't it be nice to get a few acres of land somewhere...

36. FREYMAN: Why you know Johnny, I've always wanted to live on a farm.

37. JOHN: Well, it seems there's a lot more to this farm business than most people realize at first. I mean...it's a great life, and all... but if you're brand new at it...brother, you've got plenty to learn.

38. FREYMAN: I should say so. And maybe our CONSUMER TIME listeners wonder how we became such an authority on the subject.

39. JOHN: Well...shall we tell them?

40. FREYMAN: Sure, Johnny.

41. JOHN: It all began...that day Mrs. Freyman and I had to go down in the farming country.

42. FREYMAN: We all of a sudden decided that we'd stop for a moment and pass the time of day with a farmer, who was doing his fall ploughing in a field near the highway....(FADE OUT)

43. SOUND: CAR MOTOR FADES UP. CAR STOPS.

44. JOHN: (CALLING) Hey there. Are you too busy to talk to a couple of greenhorns about farming?

45. FARMER: (PROJECTING) Howdy there! Come on over. Always like to do a little talkin'!

46. FREYMAN: (LOW VOICE NARRATION) We got out and climbed over the fence. Got to talking about this and that. Told him we were on CONSUMER TIME and told him all about the many many letters we'd received from folks who wanted to start farming after the war. He was puzzled about that...I remember his saying...

47. FARMER: Are there really so many people in this country who want to be farmers?

48. JOHN: I should say so!

49. FREYMAN: You should see those stacks of letters we get on CONSUMER TIME asking us questions about farming.

50. FARMER: (MEDITATING) Mmmmm. That's funny.

51. JOHN: What's funny about it? I think it's a great idea.

51A. FARMER: These folks...do they know what kind of farms they want to start?

52. FREYMAN: Well...no, not exactly. That's what they were asking us about.

53. FARMER: (MUSING) Wonder if they realize how early you gotta get up in the morning, when you own a farm.

54. FREYMAN: (LAUGH) Oh...I'm sure they don't!

55. FARMER: You know what?

56. FREYMAN: What?

57. FARMER: I like being a farmer. Wouldn't be anything else. Got my reasons. I like to bring up kids on the farm...just generally don't mind hard work. But, now...

58. JOHN: Are there any "buts" about it?

59. FARMER: You say that all these people want to go farming after the war?

60. FREYMAN: Sure they do.

61. FARMER: Then maybe they ought to take a whack at it first.

62. JOHN: How do you mean?

63. FARMER: Well...say you're a fellow just getting out of the Army. Want to buy a little piece of farm land somewhere. You're green as grass. Don't know nothing much except dodgin' bullets and diggin' foxholes.

64. FREYMAN: There are plenty of them, I guess.

65. FARMER: Well, my idea is...these fellows should just get a job on a farm somewhere. Be a farm-hand. Not for six weeks, not just helping with a harvest. But just live on a farm for a year, and work.

66. FREYMAN: A year...that's a long time...

67. FARMER: Not so long...not to learn all about it. You may like spring planting time, but you may not like, say, feeding up the stock in blizzard weather. I'd say a year's time enough.

68. JOHN: But...hey, look. Suppose you'd been a top sergeant in the Army, and saved up all your extra cash. Suppose you had a wad of dough stowed away somewhere, and you knew about a nice little farm you could put a down payment on.

69. FREYMAN: Yes...suppose you wanted to grow fruit...have an apple orchard, or grow peaches, or something.

70. FARMER: Sure that's fine. Maybe you'd make a real go of it. But I thought you were talking about the folks who just don't know which end of a plow to hitch a mule to.

71. FREYMAN: We are.

72. FARMER: All right. For these folks who don't know a thing about it...well... take that top sergeant you were talking about. Here he is out of the war, with his farm he's got a down payment on. Takes his wife out there...things look pretty rosy at first...then...(FADE)

73. SOUND: WIND...HOLD UNDER LOW)

74. WIFE: (MOURNFUL) Oooh...Bill, won't it ever stop snowing.

75. BILL: Take it easy kid. See it's real pretty.

76. WIFE: But...gee, you said we can't even get to town when the snow's this deep. And we have to walk half a mile to the mailbox.

77. BILL: Aw, now, we ain't expecting nothing in the mail.

78. WIFE: (WAIL) But I wanted to go to the movies tonight. Bill, we're so far away from everything.

79. FARMER: Yep...that's what you are...far away from everything. If you're city folks, you got to remember it's lonely on a farm. Summer nights, there's only the owls and the crickets. Winter nights... there ain't no noise outside 'tall except the wind blowing.

80. FREYMAN: I know. But think of the beautiful spring mornings. The apple trees in full bloom...the birds singing...everything turning green.

81. FARMER: Oh it's pretty all right. And mind you, as for me, I like it. But you take this fellow here we were talking about. Never had no experience farming. Well, spring and summer look pretty to him all right...but...(FADE)

82. WIFE: What's the matter Bill, honey. Don't look so dejected.

83. BILL: Wouldn't you think...wouldn't you just think now...that a bunch of big strong apple trees could take care of themselves?

84. WIFE: What now, Bill? First you thought we weren't going to have any apples because the frost ruined so many blossoms.

85. BILL: Then that darn forest fire cut through the orchard and I thought we were goners...

86. WIFE: Then the county agent said you should have pruned the trees last year...so what now?

87. BILL: Well, doggone it...if I don't have to spray those little old apples.

88. WIFE: Spray them? What do you mean?

89. BILL: Man said spray 'em with lead arsenate...or else they'll be all worm eaten. (EXASPERATED) Now what do you know about that?

PAUSE:

90. FARMER: (CHUCKLE) That's the way it is. Then...come fall, maybe there'll be a windstorm, and most of the apples'll fall off the trees. If this fellow can't get 'em all in fast enough, they'll mostly rot on the ground.

91. FREYMAN: Don't you think you're...well....a little pessimistic?

92. FARMER: Well, you have to be pessimistic. You have to know all the facts when you go into farming. You know, I got a big kick out of something the other day....

93. JOHN: What's that.?

94. FARMER: Saw a little booklet...called "Shall I be a Farmer?" Tells just about everything a fellow ought to know.

96. FARMER: Had a part called "What it Costs to Get Started". Mighty sensible. Says now you shouldn't pay more for the farm than you can pay back from what you earn.

97. FREYMAN: How much does a family-size farm cost? Just about, I mean.

98. FARMER: Oh, now all different prices. Depends on where you're going to farm...and what you're going to grow! But...for a family farm, I'd say you can buy a good one for about five or six thousand dollars.

99. FREYMAN: Well, I guess you'd have to figure it out very carefully at first.

100. FARMER: That's the idea. You have to be sure. You have to talk it over with somebody who really knows.

101. JOHN: Well now look...you're a farmer. Just about what could a fellow expect to earn a year, on a farm?

102. FARMER: Oh, now you can't tell. I'd say it depends on how good you are, for one thing. And how good a business man you are, for another. Of course if you put only a little money in a farm, you're likely to get only a little back.

103. FREYMAN: What kind of farm would you advise getting. I mean for someone who didn't know much about it?

104. FARMER: That just depends on the person, naturally...and what he wants to grow...that's up to him. You see...

105. JOHN: I've always wanted a poultry farm myself. Always liked to feed the chickens. And it wouldn't take much land....

106. FARMER: All right, now you just take poultry farming, for instance. Is it all pretty little hen-houses...and fluffy white chickens running about? No sir! A poultry farmer sure has his troubles...(FADE)

107. SOUND: (CHICKENS)

108. MAN: Look at 'em...look at 'em now. Two thousand hens! When I shut my eyes at night...what do I see? Chickens! Millions of chickens.

109. WOMAN: Why'd you get so many of 'em?

110. MAN: I can't make a living with any less...not and sell my eggs wholesale. Takes just as much time and trouble to care for a smaller flock, anyhow.

111. WOMAN: (SUDDENLY) Oh! Look at those dear little chicks over there...

112. MAN: "Dear little chicks!" (GROAN) I might as well have hatched them myself. I've stayed up half the night tending that incubator. I've had to put special ultra-violet screens in the chicken house windows. One night the heater went out, and I had to take the whole cheeping crowd of 'em into the kitchen! Don't say "dear little chicks" to me! (FADE)

PAUSE:

113. FARMER: This fellow's trouble is that he jumped in with both feet. Shouldn't start to be a breeder or a hatcheryman, until he'd had plenty of experience in being just an egg producer. And no matter what, when you start to raise chickens, you got to be at it every minute.

114. FREYMAN: But you don't need such a big farm...not as much land, I mean...

115. FARMER: No...but you got to put a lot of money in buildings...so it adds up about even.

116. FREYMAN: Well, if I were going to start a farm, I'd want to have cows.

117. FARMER: Dairy farming is pretty dependable far as income goes. But it's good hard work. And you ought to start with at least 12 or 15 good cows. Then, the buildings cost right much.

118. FREYMAN: Well, now, suppose somebody were just bound and determined to have a farm, no matter what. And he'd carefully figured out all the possibilities...where would be a good place to start one?

119. FARMER: Depends on a lot of things. Ought to start in the part of the country he's used to, maybe, and he ought to be around his own kind of folks. And naturally, get the best land he can afford.

120. JOHN: I sort of like the idea of pioneering new land, myself. You know, just get out into the wilderness and start from scratch.

121. FARMER: Now there you go. I don't want to be the one to tell you not to go pioneering. But...

122. JOHN: All right shoot! I can take it.

123. FARMER: Well, personally, I like to be near a school and a church...and I like to have a telephone and 'lectric lights. Also like to know I got good land.

124. FREYMAN: But so many of our listeners have written saying that when the the war's over...they want to clear out and go somewhere nobody else is.

125. FARMER: Well, my advice to 'em is to be sure and find out everything they can from their county agent...and from folks who really know. I'd tell 'em to beware of loud-mouth promotors, too.

126. JOHN: Oh, now there's something else you started to say...about making money on a farm.

127. FARMER: Yep, well if you want a good solid income out of a farm, I'd say to watch out for four things. First off, you got to get a farm that's big enough to make a living on.

128. FREYMAN: A big enough farm...all right...that's number one.

129. FARMER: Then, two...don't pay no more than it's worth...no more'n you can get back by farming.

130. JOHN: That's logical enough.

131. FARMER: Then you got to do a good job of farming, naturally...got to be a good business man to make money out of it.

132. FREYMAN: Yes. And what's the fourth thing?

133. FARMER: Well, you'll more'n likely borrow money to start....and you got to be sure the terms are good...not more'n five percent interest for a long-time loan, and that sort of thing. That part's all in the book I was talking about..."Shall I Be A Farmer?"

134. FREYMAN: Oh...well look now, one more thing. How about disabled veterans? Veterans with pensions? Is farming a good occupation for them?

135. FARMER: Farming ought to be just the life, for some of them. Course they should pick out the kind of farm they can handle.

136. JOHN: I hear that disabled veterans can get special farm training.

137. FARMER: Yes they can. Best way to get advice on this is through the county agent. Now why don't you get a copy of that little book on farming and look it over?

138. FREYMAN: That's a good idea.

139. JOHN: Well, you've certainly given us a lot of first-hand tips to turn over to our CONSUMER TIME listeners.

140. FARMER: I enjoyed it. Always enjoy doing most of the talking. Now mind you...I don't mean to discourage anybody...just simply want to tell 'em to think it over mighty carefully, and do a lot of figuring.

141. FREYMAN: We'll tell everybody about it...goodbye now.

142. JOHN: So long, and thanks again! (FADE)

PAUSE:

143. FREYMAN: (LOW NARRATION) So back we came. And here we are telling you what he told us. Incidentally, we looked up the booklet "Shall I Be A Farmer?" and decided that all our CONSUMER TIME listeners who are interested in starting a farm...should certainly have a copy.

144. JOHN: It's a good answer to all those letters we've had, too, Mrs. Freyman.

145. FREYMAN: So...Holly Wright, want to tell how our CONSUMER TIME listeners can get a copy?

146. HOLLY: Friends, if you've sort of had it in the back of your mind to buy a farm after the war...the booklet entitled "Shall I Be A Farmer?" will be a great help to you. It's yours free when you write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. The booklet discusses in detail such problems as "where to farm", "how to get started in farming","how much money you can make", "what kind of farm" and "where to get the money to start a farm". The booklet, put out by the United States Department of Agriculture, gives true facts about farming...gives important, practical suggestions. If you're a returned serviceman, or a war worker...and are planning to be a farmer some day soon...first read the booklet entitled "Shall I Be A Farmer?" It's yours free. Write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. Be sure to include your name, address, and the call letters of the station to which you are listening. That address again... CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C.

147. FREYMAN: Thanks, Holly...and Johnny...next week we're going to talk about fabrics...the kinds of fabrics we'll be able to get right after the war...and a little bit about how our favorite fabrics are being used in wartime.

148. JOHN: Be sure to be with us next week...when we hear all about fabrics on...

149. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...MONEY IN TILL

150. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

151. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.

152. JOHN: How your money buys a living in wartime!

153. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.

154. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Christine Kempton, is presented by the War Food Administration through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. This broadcast period for CONSUMER TIME has been made available as a public service.

This is the National Broadcasting Company.